



Air Products, nPhase to Offer Supply Chain Management Solution

By Editorial Staff

Joint venture to focus on use of machine-to-machine telemetry to gather real-time data for chemical and fuel industries

Chicago, IL — January 20, 2006 — The \$8.1 billion company Air Products, a provider of gases, performance materials and chemical intermediates, today announced the formation of a joint venture with nPhase LLC, looking to capitalize on the emerging trend of using inventory management services to gain supply chain efficiencies across a broad array of industrial markets.

Air Products, with operations in over 30 countries and over 20,000 employees around the globe, serves customers in technology, energy, healthcare and industrial markets worldwide.

Specifically, the joint venture will focus on the use of customized machine-to-machine (M2M) telemetry that allows remote electronic monitoring of inventory levels in tanks or other containers. Product levels are read by machine — as opposed to periodic manual readings — and transferred to a central system where such real-time data is used to automate forecasting, make production and delivery more efficient, optimize energy usage, and reduce the risk of inventory depletion.

The joint venture will benefit from Air Products' industrial contacts and advanced data management capabilities. nPhase will bring customization know-how to package the remote electronic monitoring product to meet the individual needs of customers in differing industries. Potential market applications include the petrochemical industry, fuels and lubricants, agricultural and specialty chemicals, and water treatment industries.

Air Products has experience in using remote electronic monitoring services in its liquid gas bulk supply business where its customers have benefited from managing inventory this way for more than a decade. The remote monitoring package provides sensors, computer software, communications tools and the IT infrastructure to allow the user to go on-line, or into its own enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, and review inventory and production operations data. From that data, production decisions are optimized and inventory levels reduced.

"We have been working with customers for over 10 years implementing automated supply chain management techniques. By knowing our customers' inventories, consumption levels and forecasted needs, we can manage their replenishment of products for them, and let our customers focus on their business," said Tom Ward, vice president of Integrated Supply Chain at Air Products. "It's convenient and the benefits to customers include significantly lower operational expenditures as well as increased service levels."

Buddy Eleazer, business manager of M2M solutions at Air Products, added, "We felt nPhase was the ideal company to collaborate with on this joint venture. By combining nPhase's wireless communications capabilities, IT professional services offerings and ability to commercialize enterprise remote management solutions, with Air Products extensive know-how, global field presence, world class technology, and financial strength, we expect to gain a leading industry position in our target markets."

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